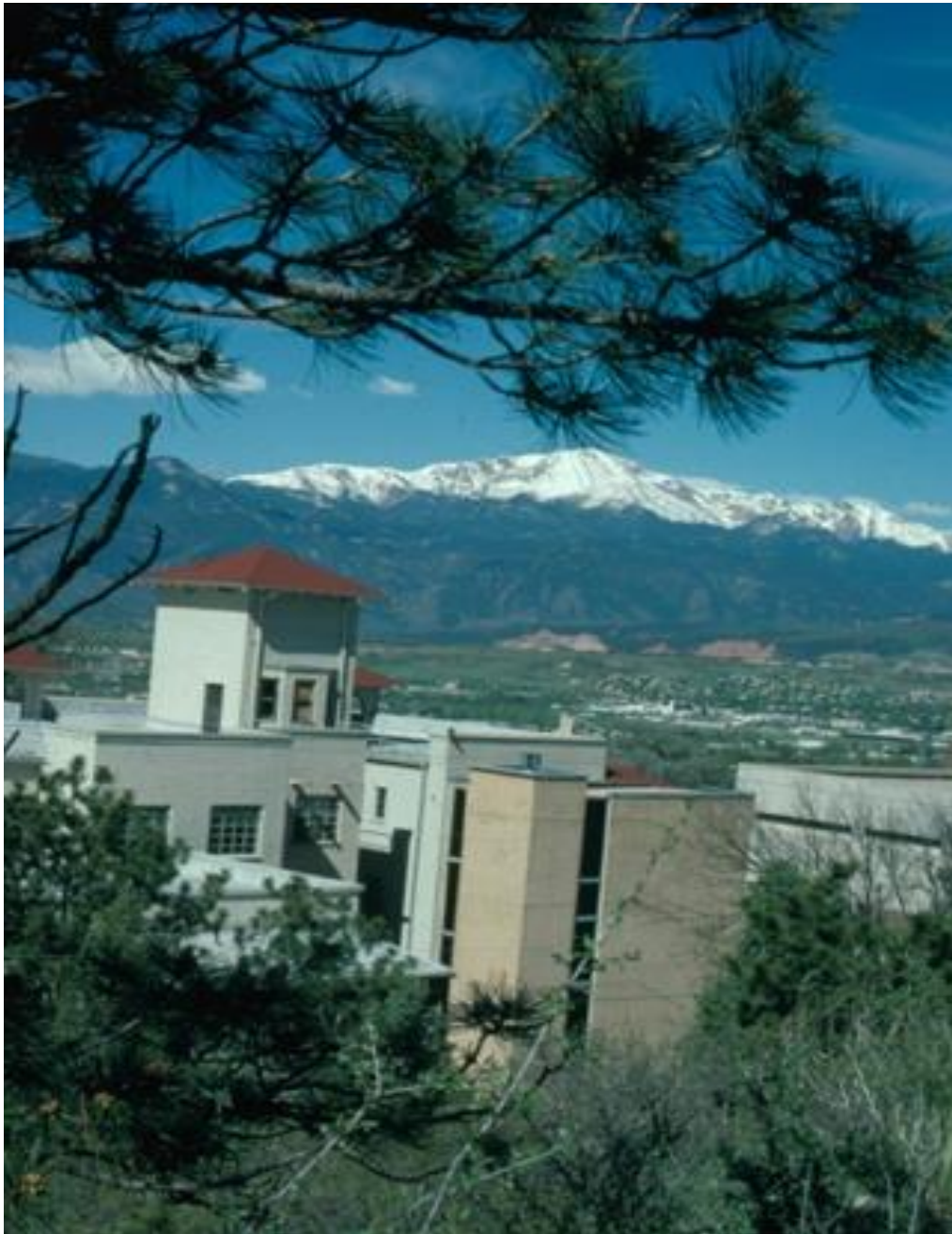


COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO ... COLORADO SPRINGS



## **The College of Business Internship Program: A Comprehensive Study of the First 10 Years**

**Charles E Beck, Associate Professor, Management & Communication (retired)**  
**Monique French, Associate Professor, Quantitative Methods**

April 21, 2016

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**The College of Business Internship Program:  
A Comprehensive Study of the First 10 Years**

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Quantitative Methods



## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to the following professionals who encouraged the process:

- Dr. Joseph Rollo, Dean of the College of Business in 2001, who approached Dr. Beck to establish an Internship program for the College of Business in Spring, 2001
- Dr. Venkat Reddy, Dean of the College of Business, succeeding Dean Rollo, who encouraged the Internship Program and appointed a dedicated director of Internships as a distinct position from the Undergraduate Student Director
- Dr. Demetri Kantarelis, Conference Chair, Business Economics Society International (B&ESI), who encouraged this research by accepting conference presentations and subsequent publication of the studies.
- Helen Kantarelis, Administrative Assistant for the Business & Economics Society International (B&ESI), who coordinates processing papers for publication.
- Lisanne McNew, former Director of Placement and Internships at the College of Business, whose administrative expertise raised the Internship Program to a higher level.
- Dr. Sam White, who became a second academic advisor for internship students in 2008.
- The dedicated student workers who assisted the internship directors in processing student applications, placement in positions, and coordination with the academic advisors.



## PREFACE

In January 2001, Joseph Rollo, Dean of the College of Business, arranged the transfer of Dr. Beck's position from the College of Business at CU Denver to UCCS so that Dr. Beck could establish an Internship Program for the UCCS College of Business. Dr. Beck was originally hired by CU Denver in 1988 to direct an MS in Technical Communication in the College of Arts and Sciences. Masters students who had professional experience in technical communication completed a thesis or a Master's Project; but those without professional experience had to complete an internship. In 1994, the Provost at CU Denver transferred Dr. Beck to the College of Business, where he could assist the College by teaching a new required Business Communication course for MBA students. Shortly thereafter, Prentice-Hall published his book *Managerial Communication: Bridging Theory and Practice*. In the CU Denver Business College, he also assumed the role of academic advisor for business internship students, at a time when the College did not formally support student internships in business.

In 2001 at UCCS, Dr. Beck developed the process and procedures for student internships, and served as the students' academic advisor. Initially, the program was administered by the undergraduate program director. As the program expanded, it came under a dedicated program advisor for internships and eventually job placement. When the College added the Professional Golf Management Program, internships were integral to obtaining PGA certification. But those internships were managed exclusively within the PGA program with a dedicated administrator, so they are not part of this more general internship study. As the College internship program expanded, Dr. Sam White became a second academic advisor for the internship students. This long-term study consists of a series of professional papers examining the growth and effectiveness of the business internship program, with additional analysis that has not previously been published.

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Internships for academic credit can serve as a joint venture between the university and the business communities, helping both groups meet their organizational objectives. Businesses gain qualified, temporary workers with verifiable skills for specific job needs. During the internship, a company can determine whether to offer the student a permanent job, but without an obligation to do so. The university enhances the student experience by providing valuable work experience to complement the academic training. Administered properly, the academic credit does not merely certify on-the-job training, but ensures that the student has gained an educational experience as well. This preliminary study summarizes the experience of one business college over 10 years: the major course areas of the internships, and preliminary evaluations from business supervisors. The requirements for academic credit and the contract with the business can serve as a model for other institutions.

Part 2: Internships for Academic Credit as a University-Business Joint Venture:  
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Internships serve multiple purposes based on the needs of the employer, the student, and the academic institution. A study of internship records and evaluations over the past ten years highlights the extensive range of academic majors of the students, and the wide variety of types of employers. While all evaluations by employer and student average in the good to excellent range, significant differences appear in the data. Employer evaluations reflect the academic position of the student, with MBA students receiving higher evaluations than juniors and seniors. Employer evaluations also reflect different communication skills among accounting, finance, and marketing majors. And students tend to get overall better ratings in the fall internships than in the spring or summer. Among organizational variables, significant differences appear in size and age of the organization. Employer ratings of students differ by student gender, and student ratings differ by gender of the student and gender of the supervisor.

Part 3: Impact of the Business Curriculum on Student Internship Experiences: A study of  
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Internships for academic credit give students the opportunity to apply classroom learning to an actual job setting. This third and final part of a ten-year study examines student subjective learning based on final internship reports submitted for academic credit. Earlier studies examined types and sizes of organizations based on NAICS codes, as well as for-profit, not-for-profit, and government agencies. The earlier studies examined student and employer ratings, controlling for academic semester and charting changes over ten years. This study focuses on two topics addressed in the final report: describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship; and describe yourself as a professional. Analysis of the first topic groups the responses according to majors' courses, core business courses, general education topics, and specific topics deemed most significant. It also examines topics which students thought needed more attention. The analysis of the second topic above focuses on the students' sense of self confidence as they move into professional fields, along with aspects of professionalism which they specifically identified. Further analysis indicates differences in student responses based in the types of industries where students served their internships.

Part 4: Impact of the Business Curriculum on Student Internship Experiences: A study of Student  
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This short study extends the further analysis begun in Part 3 Section V above. Part Three of this a ten-year study of student subjective learning focused on two topics that students addressed in their final report: describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship; and describe yourself as a professional. The analysis in Section V evaluated student learning and professionalism based on the NAIS groupings of industries where students served their internships. This further analysis considers additional organizational and student categories.

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**THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**  
**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS**  
**A 10-YEAR STUDY: PART 1**

Charles E. Beck. “Internships for Academic Credit as a University- Business Joint Venture: A Preliminary Study of the First Ten Years.”

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# **INTERNSHIPS FOR ACADEMIC CREDIT AS A UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS JOINT VENTURE: A PRELIMINARY CASE STUDY OF THE FIRST TEN YEARS**

**Charles E. Beck, University of Colorado - Colorado Springs, USA**

## **ABSTRACT**

Internships for academic credit can serve as a joint venture between the university and the business communities, helping both groups meet their organizational objectives. Businesses gain qualified, temporary workers with verifiable skills for specific job needs. During the internship, a company can determine whether to offer the student a permanent job, but without an obligation to do so. The university enhances the student experience by providing valuable work experience to complement the academic training. Administered properly, the academic credit does not merely certify on-the-job training, but ensures that the student has gained an educational experience as well. This preliminary study summarizes the experience of one business college over 10 years: the major course areas of the internships, and preliminary evaluations from business supervisors. The requirements for academic credit and the contract with the business can serve as a model for other institutions.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Internships under various names have a long served as a means of transitioning students into practicing professionals. The medical field calls it a residency; the counseling field uses a “practicum,” and educators use “student teaching.” Among the academic disciplines, Accounting has one of the longer histories, with its “Statement of Standards and Responsibilities” for public accounting internship programs (1955; Thompson, 1950). In more recent decades, the “Ivory Tower” has sponsored students from a wider range of academic backgrounds into internship programs (Hyre *et al.*, 1984). And over the past 20 years, the structure and purpose of internships has changed over time (Hurst *et al.*, 2010). But rather than focus on the internship as student experience, this paper examines the internship as a joint venture between the university and the business community, helping both groups meet organizational objectives while helping students gain valuable experience. This paper addresses the benefits from both the business and student perspectives, and examines the multiple roles that the university plays in the process. It then describes the experience of the Colorado Springs campus of the University of Colorado to illustrate the range of academic disciplines involved, along with the process used to ensuring a quality experience for student and employer.

## **II. BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE**

Internships benefit a business for a wide variety of reasons. Over the years, researchers have examined this issue from a wide variety of disciplines: Accounting (Committee on Internships, 1952; Siegal *et al.*, 1988; Beard, 2007; Beck *et al.*, 2010), Advertising (Keenan, 1992), Finance (Maskoki *et al.*, 1998), Marketing (Swanson *et al.*, 2011), Mass Communication (Conway *et al.*, 2009), Retailing (Weseley *et al.*, 2005), Technical Communication (Savage *et al.*, 2010). In addition, internships have been studied from the perspective of college education in general (Hyre *et al.*, 1984; Cheslick, 19899; White *et al.*, 2008), as well as the effects on organizations in general (Ryan *et al.*, 1997; Clemence *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2010). Table 1 lists the general conclusions reached by these various studies.

### **Table 1: Internships from Employer Perspective**

Business meets real-world needs  
Reduces recruitment costs  
Companies can gauge the intern's fit into the organization  
Companies and individuals evaluate without long-term commitment  
Company gains new idea, skills, and enthusiasm  
Companies gain short-term skill for actual work at lower cost than full-time

### **III. STUDENT PERSPECTIVE**

Most discussions of internships focus on benefits to the student. As one of the earliest discussions, Thompson outlines the advantages of accounting internships (1950):

- The student can bridge the gap between academic theory and practical application.
- The student obtains knowledge of organizational structure and office operations.
- The student can make wiser course selection when back on campus.
- The student recognizes the importance of non-accounting skills:
  - The ability to write reports, memos, letters
  - The ability to speak effectively
  - The art of preparing charts and exhibits
  - The importance of good personal appearance
  - The need for good manners
- The student gains job contacts if the employer was favorably impressed.

Although written more than sixty years later, a more recent discussion of marketing internships identifies similar advantages for students (Swanson, et al., 2011):

- Improving job preparedness by acquiring relevant work experience
- Developing leadership abilities
- Enhancing interpersonal skills
- Establishing networking opportunities
- Helping students put concrete experience to abstract concepts
- Giving students better awareness when deciding education and vocation direction
- Helping graduates more quickly adjust to the work environment
- Gaining higher starting salaries and higher levels of satisfaction
- Obtaining wages and/or academic credit for work

From the student perspective, internships do not just “happen”; rather, students must be proactive in finding a good internship that matches their needs. Students can start by tailoring courses to meet industry needs (Polakowski, xxxx); then they increase effort to ensure they get a good fit (Hazelwood, 2004). Once on the job, students need to take charge to ensure they get a good experience rather than “sidelined” into low-level tasks (Adams, 2011).

### **IV. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS**

Evidence of successful internship programs come from both colleges and industry, with at least one comprehensive study relating internships to career success. Early evidence from school successes include the University of Georgia (Clemens, 1991) and the University of Missouri-Columbia (Albritton, 1991).

Michigan Tech expands the scope by focusing on successful international internships for MBA students (Chapel, 1998). With the expansion of technology, IT students have turned internships into full-time positions and freelance opportunities (Smith, 2007). From the business perspective, different industries have encouraged their members to recruit and select interns as a means of creating a pipeline for new employees that meet their needs: real estate (Shand *et al.*, 2009); logistics (Knemeyer and Murphy, 2001); public relations (Somerick, 2004); and small business (C. P., 2006). In examining the effect of internships on career development, the *Journal of Marketing Education* found that

Business undergraduates with internship experience reported better preparation in job acquisition skills and obtained their initial employment positions more quickly than non-interns. Interns also reported earning higher salaries and experiencing higher levels of overall job satisfaction than their non-intern counterparts. Benefits also accrued to organizations that hire interns. Internship programs provide employers with a known pool of high-quality employees at a significant savings in recruitment costs. [Gault, et al., 2000]

## V. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Administered properly, the academic credit does not merely certify on-the-job training, but ensures that the student has gained an educational experience as well. Internships will obviously differ based on level of responsibility, specific job descriptions, the nature of the business involved, and size of the company. Nevertheless, general conditions apply regardless of these specifics. The Statement of Standards published in 1955 outlines the basic responsibilities needed from the student, the employer, and the school involved. Table 2 lists these responsibilities.

**Table 2: Statement of Standards and Responsibilities**

<i>Student</i>	<i>Employer</i>	<i>School</i>
To lake the job seriously	To inform school and student about salary, expenses, etc.	To provide qualified students
To treat clients' affairs as confidential	To pay a fair salary	To act as channel of communication between student and employer
To accept the opportunity to learn	To see that student gets a clear understanding of work rules and standards of professional conduct	To brief the student on standards for the junior accountant
	To provide student with varied assignments	To require student reports
	To evaluate the student's work and to discuss results with him	
	To furnish a report to the school	

Source: "Statement of Standards and Responsibilities Under Public Accounting Internship Programs" (1955), *Accounting Review* 30:2 (Apr) 206-211.

While overall internship experiences are successful, those who fail tend to have poor selection of participants, inadequate planning by the school and the business, and insufficient supervision and follow through (Thompson, 1950). According to Somerick, programs succeed if they maintain academic integrity, professional standards, and accountability by tracking activities and requiring a final report (2001). The internet provides an easy means of monitoring on-the-job performance. Bulger advocates a range of approaches to accountability: self-reflective journals, electronic bulletin boards, performance appraisals, and course evaluations (2006). Other authors discuss the use of reflective journals as part of the overall process (Tsang, 2003); A significant administrative issue for internships concerns paid vs. non-paid interns.

A recent discussion in the Payroll Manager's Report lists the guidelines for unpaid internships., as described in Table 3.

**Table 3: Criteria for Internships to Exclude Minimum Wage**

Internship is similar to training given in an educational environment,  
though it occurs at the employer's facilities  
The experience is for the benefit of the intern  
The intern does not displace regular employees, but works under close  
supervision of existing staff  
The employer derives no immediate advantage from the activities of the  
intern, and on occasion may actually be impeded  
The intern is not necessarily entitled to a job at the end of the internship  
The employer and the intern understand that the intern is not entitled to  
wages for the time spent in the internship

Taking a more light-hearted approach to the issue in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Ben Yagoda describes how to avoid the official administrative hassles in his essay "Will Work for academic Credit (2008).

#### **IV. ADAPTING INTERNSHIPS FOR REMOTE LOCATIONS**

The majority of studies of internships assume colleges near a fairly large city, where students have immediate access to a wide variety of businesses. But isolated colleges can also find opportunities for students as well. The concept of "business" can expand to include the college itself, government offices, and small independent business. College offices can provide internships for a variety of majors: finance and accounting is an obvious opportunity, but opportunities also appear in student recruitment (marketing), personnel (human resources), dormitory or food service management (operations, supply chain management), and public relations (business communication). City or county government offices also can provide opportunities for internship experience. In addition, the surrounding community will have a variety of small business that can provide intern opportunities, especially if the college undertakes an outreach to the community by emphasizing how student expertise can help the small business. Finally, although most internships happen during the normal academic year, they may also occur at any location during the summer, during winter or spring break, or during a semester abroad.

#### **V. INTERNSHIPS AS JOINT VENTURES**

Businesses and colleges use a variety of methods to help each other link theory with practice. These linkages may include special projects (Tanniru and Agarwai, 2002) or innovative partnerships (Guizzo, 2006). But the internship experience is the most common link, providing students with "real world" experience on the job and business with trained employees who can assist the business and perhaps become a full-time employee. Some companies set up extensive relationships with a local college as a way to enhance staffing, such as Mead Corporation's creative relationship with Missouri Western State College (Roever, 2000). In creating a joint relationship, both the business community and the college see mutual benefit, where the college acts as a screener to ensure that the business gets quality intern employees (Herbers, 2005). Because hiring new employees always involves at least some element of uncertainty, internships allows the company to "try out" a potential employee: the company gains a qualified temporary employee, but it still has the time to ensure that this employee could become a good fit (Simpson, 2004). Properly managed by both parties, internships strengthen alliances between the university and the

community. In particular, “Schools provide concepts, tools, and methodologies for solving problems and developing thinking skills, but actual work provides the context. Often, the first part of the engagement is to figure out what the job really is about—and only experience gives professionals the tools to do that” (Lauber *et al.*, 2004).

## **VI. SPECIFIC INTERNSHIP REQUIREMENTS AT UCCS**

The college of Business at the Colorado Springs Campus of the University of Colorado began its internship program in January 2001. From the beginning, the program took a “contract” approach to overall management. Student and employer signed agreed to the specific job responsibilities and whether the internship was paid or not. In addition, students needed to meet minimum grade-point averages before they could enroll, and had to have completed the core academic courses that matched the area (e.g., basic accounting prior to taking an accounting internship). For academic credit, students had to fulfill specific requirements beyond what the employer required:

- Meet periodically with the faculty advisor
- Maintain a reflective journal
- Submit journal and work-samples on line at least every 2 weeks
- Complete a final report based on topics assigned by the academic advisor.
- Submit an evaluation of the program

The key for academic credit remains the reflective journal: in addition to on-the-job training, the journal adds a “reflective overlay” to the experience. In the journal, students go beyond describing tasks on the job. Rather, they capture their thoughts, assumptions, expectations, observations, reactions along the way. They should write something every day, recognizing that the journal will be more extensive when encountering something new/different, and rather brief when doing routine tasks.

Although the academic community uses semesters and summer terms for academic credit, the actual internship may or may not match that schedule. The actual dates reflect the student-employer contract, with academic credit listed as close as possible to those dates. Students may start a “summer internship” in April, but register for credit during the June summer term. As a result, students are on their own schedule, not a typical academic schedule. When students reach the end of their internship, they upload a note that they are ready for final paper topics. At that point, the adviser reviews the journals and work samples, and determines a series of topics that the student addresses in the final report. Although a few of the topics will appear on almost everyone’s list, most topics apply to the specific experiences of the individual student. The journal provided a means of capturing day-to-day experiences, but the report enables students to reflect on a topic over the duration of the internship. The figures in the appendix illustrate the documentation used to administer the overall program:

Figure 1: Student Application for Internship

Figure 2: Student Contract for Internship

Figure 3: Employer Application for Internship

Figure 4: Student and Employer Ethics Agreement for Internship

Figure 5: Sample Internship Final Paper Requirements

## **VII. SUMMARY OF UCCS INTRNSHIP EXPERIENCE 2001 -2011**

The following tables summarize information over the past 11 years. Table 4 lists the student academic area and types of internship, undergraduate student, graduate student, and non-credit. From the beginning, accounting and finance majors were highly represented. Many of the MBA students did want to gain

internship experience, but not necessarily for academic credit. Some of the newer majors appear on the list with a few entries, such as students in the Bachelor of Innovation program and those in sport management or sport marketing. Students not reflected below are those in the PGA Golf Management program. Students in this program receive a BA in Business plus certification by the PGA. They complete three internships during their program at golf courses around the country. Since that program has a distinct set of requirements, those students are supervised separately from the general population of business students.

**Table 4: Academic Field for Internships: Credit and No-Credit**

<i>Academic Field</i>	<i>Ugrad Credit</i>	<i>Grad Credit</i>	<i>Non-credit</i>
Accounting	68	5	79
Bachelor of Innovation			3
Business Administration	51	2	25
Communication			1
Engineering			1
Exchange Student			1
Finance	45	3	73
General Business			1
Human Resource Management	14		36
Information Systems	12		12
International Business	6	1	32
MBA			81
Management	26		30
Marketing	83	2	104
Operations Management	1		
Service Management	1		2
Sport Management			1
Sport Marketing			1

At the end of the internship, both student and employer submit evaluations. These go to the program administrator, not the academic advisor. Table 5 depicts the overall averages on the evaluations completed over the past ten years. The rating uses a five-point scale, with five as the highest.

**Table 5: Average Ratings of Internships**

<i>Employer Rating Students</i>		<i>Students Rating Employer</i>	
Ability	4.7	Orientation	4.2
Grasp of concepts	4.6	Quality of Work	4.4
Reliability	4.7	Assignments	4.4
Initiative	4.6	Communication w/ Superior	4.5
Attitude	4.8	Acceptance by Co-workers	4.7
Punctuality	4.6	Educational Value	4.6
Accepts Responsibility	4.7	Career Value	4.6
Communication Skills	4.5		
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.6</b>



APPENDIX

Figure 1: Student Application for Internship



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**Internship Program-Student Application**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Campus phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Declared Major \_\_\_\_\_ Hours completed to date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class Standing (circle one)      Junior      Senior      MBA Current GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Discipline/course number applying for: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you already have an internship secured?   ☐ No      ☐ Yes

I am applying for a   1   2   3   (circle one) credits, which means I need to work 50, 100, or 150 hours to complete the program. I wish to participate in the program for the \_\_\_\_\_ semester of 20\_\_\_\_.

Anticipated start date: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Submit these required items with the Student Application:**

- Current resume
- Job Description- Attach the job description from the business/organization on company letterhead. Outline the nature of the work to be performed, including the hours of work per week and the rate of pay.
- Employer Application
- Waiver of Liability
- Certificate of Insurance Request
- Internship Ethics Agreement

Name of Business where the internship will be held \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact at Business \_\_\_\_\_

**General Educational Goals:** Indicate your desired objectives to be achieved.

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## Figure 2: Student Contract for Internship

### Contract for Academic Credit

Once your application and internship is approved, you will need to contact Dr. Beck (255-3416) or Dr. White (255-3661) to clarify the specific academic requirements outlined below:

#### A. Student/Faculty Consultations

1. Meet with advisor to clarify requirements and sign this form.
2. E-mail or phone every 2 weeks.
3. Meet at least twice in person during the semester.
4. Toward end of semester, bring final log of activities and work samples to meeting.
5. Other requirements as discussed.

#### B. On-going Documentation

1. Maintain a journal of activities (submit 7-8) – daily at first; less frequent as internship progressed. In addition to details on what you did and how it turned out, include reflections on your assumptions, expectations, and observations. As the Internship progresses, reflect on the changes you see in doing your job.
2. Submit the log in the BlackBoard at least every 7-10 days.
3. Keep a file of 3-4 work samples – what you did on the job.
4. Periodically submit samples through BlackBoard; if the documents do not adapt to electronic submission, bring them to the office meeting or make other arrangements.

#### C. Final Report

1. The formal report summarizes your internship
2. The basic report consists of 9-10 pages, with topics assigned by the faculty advisor toward the end of the internship.
3. The bound report includes a table of contents plus attachments: activity log, and work samples.
4. Due Date: \_\_\_\_\_ (no later than a week before finals to ensure grading for semester).

#### D. Final Note

Although any student may complete an internship without academic credit, those who have selected academic credit ***must fulfill the above requirements***. In this pass/fail course, those who fail to keep and send activity logs, complete contact hours, or fail to meet with the instructor, will **earn** the grade of “F.”

By signing below, **I understand that I have read and understand the Student Expectations**, Contract for Academic Credit, and that I meet the qualifications for the program. I have not enrolled for academic credit in other programs (i.e., Independent Study) for this same work and will not do so in the future.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director of Career and Placement Center

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Figure 3: Employer Application for Internship**



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***Internship Program***

Internships are an integral part of the College of Business education. Through these pre-professional opportunities students gain valuable practical experience to complement their academic foundation.

**Employer Application for Internship**

Firm Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student who will be interning: \_\_\_\_\_

My firm will be participating in the CU-Colorado Springs College of Business Internship Program for the \_\_\_\_\_ semester of 20\_\_\_\_.

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours Per Week \_\_\_\_\_

Unpaid Internship \_\_\_\_\_ Paid Internship \_\_\_\_\_ Rate of pay \_\_\_\_\_

My firm understands the student has elected to attempt the internship for credit. My firm will make every effort to accommodate the hours needed. In order for the student to receive credit, they must work a minimum of 50 hours (1 credit), 100 hours (2 credits), or 150 hours (3 credits) to complete the internship, depending on the number of credit hours the student has requested. Please speak to the intern on this matter.

**My firm has received and reviewed the Employer Expectations. We understand the obligation of employers participating in the program and are willing to abide by them.**

Please be sure to indicate in the internship position description any specific educational goals, special training programs, workshops, or outside reading requirement that will be part of the job

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor email: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Figure 4: Student and Employer Ethics Agreement for Internships**



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## **Internship Ethics Agreement**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester and Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the College of Business Ethics Initiative is to instill ethical principles into the personal and organizational decision-making process of every member of the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs community. This integrative learning environment will create leaders with integrity, capable of responsible global business management and conscious of the accountability inherent in corporate governance. The student and employer are expected to adhere to the high level of ethical business standards held within UCCS and the College of Business.

Initiative activities focus on four program areas:

- 1. Ethics** (ethical decision-making, ethical leadership, organizational ethical programs)
- 2. Corporate Social Responsibility**
- 3. Global Sustainability**
- 4. Corporate Governance**

As a student or employer in an internship, I understand and agree to the following:

- A. I will adhere to, and abide by, all University of Colorado at Colorado Springs policies and procedures, and all revisions there for.
- B. I understand that the Director of Career and Placement Center has final authority on the interpretation and application of the UCCS policies and procedures.
- C. I will notify the Career and Placement Office immediately if there are any changes in the job duties or compensation of my assigned internship.
- D. I will notify the Career and Placement Office immediately if, in my opinion, my internship subjects me to unhealthy or unsafe conditions or illegal behavior or activities, including sexual harassment, illegal discrimination, fraud, or safety code violations.
- E. I will conform to the professional standards of the internship and will employ high standards of ethical behavior at all times during the internship.
- F. I will refrain from corruption, unfair competition, or business practices harmful to society.
- G. I will protect the human rights and dignity of all people affected by my work, and I will oppose discrimination and exploitation.
- H. I understand, acknowledge, and agree that in the event I violate any of the above provisions, or any University of Colorado and Colorado Springs policies or procedure, I may be subject to the following sanctions: loss of academic credit for the internship, and/or loss of eligibility to participate in future internships.

I.

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Figure 5: Sample Internship Final Paper Requirements

### Report Topics

For the final paper, write 8-10 pages (single spaced) using the following topics as ways to organize your thoughts. Take the topics, develop subheadings for your paper, and then write.

- Described how you integrated yourself into the organization as a new employee.
- Outline the stages of the I-9 project and its significance in federal reporting.
- Describe the HR networking seminar, including organizations involved and overall significance.
- Explain the process of preparing spreadsheets for benefits and premium billing.
- Describe the activities needed to process end of fiscal year information.
- Explain the steps for hiring and interviewing for a new position.
- Outline the steps needed to complete the processing of a new employee into the system.
- Explain the purpose of D & O Insurance
- Describe ways the organization makes employees feel part of the organization, including the approach to praise and recognition
- Explain how you used your own initiative in approaching tasks on the job.
- Describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship.
- Describe yourself as a professional.
- [Add other topics if you wish – sequence all of the topics in your own way.]

Consider the paper a professional report -- look over the final draft for typos, grammar errors, etc. I'm the prime audience, but sometimes a department chair or the undergraduate director wants to see the final paper from an internship student, so you want to look good!!

### Format for Internship Report

A bound report including the following:

Report Cover Page

Table of Contents (page i)

List all topics/subtopics in the report

List all items in the appendices

Report itself (starts on page #1)

**Introduction to your overall experience, introduce coming topics**

**Specific Subtopic #1**

**Subtopic #2**

**Subtopic #n...**

**Conclusion**

Appendix 1 Journal as a single document (Page numbering continues)

Appendix 2 1<sup>st</sup> Work Sample identified by name (Page numbering continues)

Appendix 3n Continue Samples – Identify each sample on original table of contents

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**THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**  
**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS**  
**A 10-YEAR STUDY: PART 2**

Charles E. Beck and Monique French Dooley. “Internships for Academic Credit as a University-Business Joint Venture: Analysis of the First Ten Years.”

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# **INTERNSHIPS FOR ACADEMIC CREDIT AS A UNIVERSITY-BUSINESS JOINT VENTURE: ANALYSIS OF THE FIRST TEN YEARS**

**Charles E. Beck, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, USA**  
**Monique French Dooley, University of Colorado Colorado Springs, USA**

## **ABSTRACT**

Internships serve multiple purposes based on the needs of the employer, the student, and the academic institution. A study of internship records and evaluations over the past ten years highlights the extensive range of academic majors of the students, and the wide variety of types of employers. While all evaluations by employer and student average in the good to excellent range, significant differences appear in the data. Employer evaluations reflect the academic position of the student, with MBA students receiving higher evaluations than juniors and seniors. Employer evaluations also reflect different communication skills among accounting, finance, and marketing majors. And students tend to get overall better ratings in the fall internships than in the spring or summer. Among organizational variables, significant differences appear in size and age of the organization. Employer ratings of students differ by student gender, and student ratings differ by gender of the student and gender of the supervisor.<sup>(a)</sup>

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This paper is the second part of a study of the ten-year experience in managing internships for academic credit. The first part of the study addressed the benefits from both the business and student perspectives, and examines the multiple roles that the university plays in the process. It also outlined the range of academic disciplines involved, the process used to ensure a quality experience for student and employer, and the evaluations provided by both student and employer. This paper continues the analysis. We begin by briefly describing the joint venture by contrasting employer and student expectations from internships, then we then summarize the student academic majors and the evaluation results. The extended analysis focuses on the size and types of organizations that provided internships, differences among academic major, changes over time, and any differences between the faculty members serving as academic advisors. We end with a summary of the key findings, implications of the study, and suggestions for further research.

## **II. JOINT VENTURE: STUDENT AND BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES**

Internships benefit a business for a wide variety of reasons. Over the years, researchers have examined this issue from a variety of disciplines: Accounting (Statement of Standards, 1955; Beard, 2007); Advertising (Keenan, 1992), Finance (Maskooki *et al.*, 1998), Marketing (Swanson *et al.*, 2011), Mass Communication (Conway *et al.*, 2009), Retailing (Weseley *et al.*, 2005; Hurst *et al.*, 2010), and Technical Communication (Savage *et al.*, 2010). In addition, internships have been studied from the perspective of college education in general (Hyre *et al.*, 1984; Cheslick, 1989; White *et al.*, 2008), as well as the effects on organizations in general (Ryan *et al.*, 1997; Clemence *et al.*, 2001; Lee *et al.*, 2010). From the student perspective, internships do not just “happen”; rather, proactive students find a good internship that matches their needs. Students can start by tailoring courses to meet industry needs (Polakowski, 2009); then they increase effort to ensure they get a good fit (Hazelwood, 2004). Once on the job, students

(a) The authors acknowledge the significant input provided by three staff members in the UCCS College of Business: Windy Hadad, Director of the Campus MBA Program; Rashell McCann, Program Director, Undergraduate programs; and Lisanne McNew, Director of Internship and Career Placement.

need to take charge to ensure they get a good experience rather than get “sidelined” into low-level tasks (Adams, 2011).

Businesses and colleges use a variety of methods to help each other link theory with practice. These linkages may include special projects (Tanniru and Agarwai, 2002) or innovative partnerships (Guizzo, 2006). Some companies set up extensive relationships with a local college as a way to enhance staffing, such as Mead Corporation’s creative relationship with Missouri Western State College (Roever, 2000). Colleges also build partnerships government agencies (Kearney *et al.*, 2007). Among the ways to connect colleges with the active workforce, the internship serves as the most common link. Our study examines one specific College of Business based on evaluation data from ten years. Internships as a joint venture give students “real world” job experience, while businesses gain trained employees who can assist the business and perhaps become a full-time employee. In creating a joint relationship, both the business community and the college see mutual benefit, where the college acts as a screener to ensure that the business gets quality intern employees (Herbers, 2005). Because hiring new employees always involves at least some element of uncertainty, internships allow the company to “try out” a potential employee: the company gains a qualified temporary employee, but it still has the time to ensure that this employee could become a good fit (Simpson, 2004). Properly managed by both parties, internships strengthen alliances between the university and the community. In particular, “Schools provide concepts, tools, and methodologies for solving problems and developing thinking skills, but actual work provides the context. Often, the first part of the engagement is figuring out what the job really is about—and only experience gives professionals the tools to do that” (Lauber *et al.*, 2004). Table 1 lists the general conclusions from these studies.

**Table 1: Employer and Student Perspectives**

<i>Employer</i>	<i>Student</i>
Business meets real-world needs	Improving job preparedness by acquiring relevant work experience
Reduces recruitment costs	Developing leadership abilities Enhancing interpersonal skills Establishing networking opportunities
Companies can gauge the intern’s fit into the organization	Helping students put concrete experience to abstract concepts
Companies and individuals evaluate without long-term commitment	Giving students better awareness when deciding education and vocation direction
Company gains new idea, skills, and enthusiasm	Helping graduates more quickly adjust to the work environment
Companies gain short-term skill for actual work at lower cost than full-time	Gaining higher starting salaries and higher levels of satisfaction
	Obtaining wages and/or wages for work

### III. SUMMARY OF UCCS INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE 2001 -2011

The College of Business at the Colorado Springs campus of the University of Colorado established its internship program in January of 2001. From the start, both interns and business supervisors submitted evaluations at the end of the internship period. These go to the program administrator, not the academic advisor. Overall, both students and employers reported high levels of satisfaction with the program. The rating uses a five-point scale, with five as the highest, and they average from good (4.2) to very good (4.5) to excellent (4.7).

**Table 2: Average Ratings of Internships**

<i>Employer Rating Students</i>		<i>Students Rating Employer</i>	
Ability	4.7	Orientation	4.2
Grasp of Concepts	4.6	Quality of Work	4.4
Reliability	4.7	Assignments	4.4
Initiative	4.6	Communication with Superiors	4.5
Attitude	4.8	Acceptance by Co-Workers	4.7
Punctuality	4.6	Educational Value	4.6
Accepts Responsibility	4.7	Career Value	4.6
Communication Skills	4.5		
<i>Overall</i>	4.7	<i>Overall</i>	4.6

The internship program was designed for students in the College of Business; so with few exceptions, the students are business majors. While Table 3 lists the students' major, all students complete core courses in their first two years of study:

2 Accounting  
Algebra  
Calculus  
Integrated Skills for Management  
Macroeconomics  
Macroeconomics  
MS Office Applications & Computer Basics  
2 Statistics

In their junior year, students also take core courses in the key areas of business:

Basic Finance  
Fundamentals of Operations Management  
Introduction to Management and Organizations  
Introduction to Management Information Systems  
Principles of Marketing

Beyond the core courses completed, students must have at least a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4 –point scale (B-/C+). Employers seeking interns select some on the need for just a general background in business, and others on the need for specialization (e.g., accounting, finance, marketing). Table 3 lists the student academic area and types of internship, undergraduate student, graduate student, and non-credit. From the beginning, accounting and finance majors were highly represented. Many of the MBA students did want to gain internship experience, but not necessarily for academic credit. For this study, only “for credit” internships required evaluations by employer and student. Some of the newer majors appear on the bottom of the list with rather few students enrolled: students in the Bachelor of Innovation program and in sport management or sport marketing. Students not reflected

below are those in the PGA Golf Management program (students earn certification by the PGA plus a BS in Business). They complete three internships during their program at golf courses around the country. Since that program has a distinct set of requirements determined by the PGA, those students are supervised separately from the general population of business students.

**Table 3: Academic Field for Internships: Credit and No-Credit**

<i>Academic Field</i>	<i>Ugrad Credit</i>	<i>Grad Credit</i>	<i>Non-credit</i>	<i>Total</i>
Accounting	103	7	40	150
Business Administration	32	1	9	42
Finance	94	2	28	124
General Business	18		1	19
Human Resource Management	43		11	54
Information Systems	18		8	26
International Business	34		16	50
MBA		58	32	90
Management	37	1	9	47
Marketing	130	3	53	186
No Major Declared	8		73	81
Bachelor of Innovation			3	3
Communication			1	1
Engineering			1	1
Exchange Student			1	1
Non degree	2			2
Pre-Business	1			1
Service Management	2			3
Sport Management			1	1
Sport Marketing			1	1

#### **IV. TYPES AND SIZES OF EMPLOYER OPERATIONS**

The majority of the internships took place within the metropolitan Colorado Springs area, with a small number in Denver or out of state (summer or a semester off campus). However, the organizations varied widely in type and size of organization, number of employees, year of founding, and line of business. Tables 4 through 8 list these distinctions in types and size of operations, year of founding, line of work (listing only those with 5 or more students), and organizations by NAICS classification codes.

**Table 4: Type of Organization**

<i>Type of Ownership</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Public	324	87.3
Owned by Public Company	31	8.0
Non-Public	32	8.3
Total	387	100
<b><i>Operations</i></b>		
Manufacturing	29	7.5
Non-Manufacturing	358	92.5
Total	387	100
<b><i>Location</i></b>		
Branch	35	9.0
Headquarters	118	30.5
Single Location	230	59.4
Not reported	4	1.0
Total	387	100

**Table 5: Facility Size & Number of Employees**

<i>Size</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<b><i>Facility Square Footage</i></b>		
Not Reported	50	12.9
< 5,000	155	40.1
5,001 – 50,000	126	32.6
50,001 – 500,000	41	10.6
500,001 – 1,000,000	9	2.3
>1,000,000	6	1.6
Total	387	100
<i>Number of Employees</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Not Reported	15	3.9
0-5	165	42.6
6-10	30	7.8
11-20	35	9.0
21-50	59	12.7
51-100	25	6.5
101-500	39	10.1
501-1,000	9	2.3
1,001-10,000	17	4.4
>10,000	3	0.8

**Table 6: Year of Founding**

<i>Year Range</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Not Reported	72	18.6
1775-1900	13	3.4
1901-1950	45	11.6
1951-1980	54	14.0
1981-1990	40	10.3
1991-2000	68	17.6
2001-2010	89	23.0
2010-2011	6	1.6
Total	387	100

**Table 7: Line of Business**

Business services	25
Accounting, auditing, and bookkeeping	14
National security	12
Business consulting	11
Membership organizations	11
Sports clubs, managers, and promoters	11
Management consulting services	10
Real estate agents and managers	10
Security brokers and dealers	10
Custom computer programming services	8
Business associations	7
Eating places	7
Engineering services	7
Religious organizations	7
Advertising agencies	6
Hotels and motel	6
Investment advice	6
Individual and family services	5
Insurance agents, brokers, and service	5
Television broadcasting stations	5
not reported	35

**Table 8: Organizational NAICS Codes**

Sector	Description	Students
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0
22	Utilities	4
23	Construction	9
31-33	Manufacturing	39
42	Wholesale Trade	4
44-45	Retail Trade	26
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	1
51	Information	13
52	Finance and Insurance	67
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	20
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	124
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	0
56	Admin & Support; Waste Mgmt & Remediation Services	38
61	Educational Services	22
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	25
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	15
72	Accommodation and Food Service	16
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	57
92	Public Administration	25
<b>Total</b>		<b>503</b>



## V. RATING DIFFERENCES BY ORGANIZATIONAL VARIABLES

As Table 2 indicates, the overall evaluations of students and employers on a 5-point scale are fairly high – all above 4 points on a 5-point scale. Such ratings indicate that both students and employers were pleased with their respective experience. However, despite the overall positive responses, some differences do appear. One-Way Analysis of Variance was used to investigate differences between ratings for both students and employers. In the event that Levenes test for Variance indicated heterogeneity of variances, the Brown-Forsythe nonparametric test was used as prescribed by Boneau (1960). For all significant findings, the Games-Howell multiple comparison test was used to determine specific differences.

### Ownership, Location and NAIS Type of Organization

The ratings of both students and employers showed no significant difference for the type of organization: nonpublic/public/owned by public company. For type of location, a significant difference appeared in a single issue: students rating employers in educational value. Although all of the ratings are positive, as Table 9 demonstrates, students working at a single location business or at a branch of a larger organization reported higher educational value than students working at a headquarters location. This finding may indicate that experience students receive at the lower levels better meets their immediate needs of learning about organizations than those serving at the headquarters level. Higher levels of an organization face different issues than the lower levels, or single-location companies.

**Table 9: Ratings Differences Location Type**

Students Rating	Branch Mean	Headquarters Mean	Single Location Mean	P-value
Employers				
Educational Value	4.63	4.43		*0.064
		4.43	4.64	**0.069

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### Organization Size – People and Facility

In the student rating of employers, two issues reveal significant differences: communication with superiors and career value. For size of organization in both number of employees and physical size, students in the smaller organizations rated communication with superiors and career value lower. These findings may reflect the fact that smaller organizations must handle all aspects of the business, rather than just part of it, as happens in larger organizations. The scope of responsibilities may make superiors less accessible to interns. Additionally, small business often must change quickly to adapting situations; thus roles and responsibilities could change from the initial scope of the internship. With the changing requirements, supervisors may have less time to work with interns. Table 10 displays the findings for communication with superiors and career value based on number of employees, and Table 11 displays the same two issues for facility size.

**Table 10: Ratings Differences Number of Employees at Site**

Students Rating	0-5 Mean	6-20 Mean	21-100 Mean	>100 Mean	P-value
<b>Employers</b>					
Communication with Superior	4.29	4.60			*0.094
Career Value	4.51	4.80			**0.018

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

**Table 11: Ratings Differences Facility Size (Sq Ft)**

<b>Students Rating Employers</b>	<b>0-5000 Mean</b>	<b>5001-50,000 Mean</b>	<b>50,001-500,000 Mean</b>	<b>&gt;500,000 Mean</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Communication					*0.089
with Superior	4.29	4.59			
Career Value	4.29		4.66		**0.041
	4.52	4.73			*0.099
*Significant at $\alpha = 0.1$					
**Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$					

### Organizational Industry Classification

In the statistical analysis, no significant differences appeared when using the entire classification categories. But when collapsing the categories into three broad groups, the data revealed a significant difference between the middle group and the higher classification groups. For clarity, those groupings are reproduced here:

51	Information
52	Finance and Insurance
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
61	Education Services
62	Health Care and Social Assistance
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
72	Accommodation and /food Services
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)
92	Public Administration

The grouping that contained no differences included utilities, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and retail trade. Grouping 51-56 represents accounting, finance and technical services – the more introverted (and often “geek”) types of careers. In contrast, the 61-92 grouping reflects the more extraverted, interactive fields in serving the public. So students in these differing types of fields have different expectations concerning the career value of the internship. Table 12 displays this finding.

**Table 12: NAICS Groupings**

	<b>NAICS Codes</b>			
<b>Students Rating</b>	<b>22-48</b>	<b>51-56</b>	<b>61-92</b>	<b>P-value</b>
Employer				
Career Value		4.55	4.73	*0.099
*Significant at $\alpha = 0.1$				

### Organization Age – Year of Founding

Year of founding reveals significant differences in both student and employer rating evaluations. In three dimensions, companies founded within the past 20 years rated lower than older companies. From the employer ratings, companies founded in the 50's and 60's rated student reliability significantly higher than companies founded in the 90's and 2000's. From the student ratings, companies founded prior to 1950 rated significantly higher than companies founded in the previous 20 years on two

dimensions: orientation and communication with superiors.

More established companies tend to have more stable organizational cultures, and often have extensive experience in working with interns. Older companies tend to conduct orientation programs that instill a sense of history. For Colorado Springs, history includes renowned organizations (the Broadmoor Hotel), national financial institutions (USAA and T. Rowe Price), and established retailers (Target and Kohls). Table 13 reflects these findings.

**Table 13: Ratings Differences by Year of Founding**

	<b>Prior to 1950 Mean</b>	<b>1951-1970 Mean</b>	<b>1971-1990 Mean</b>	<b>After 1991 Mean</b>	<b>P-value</b>
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>					
Reliability		4.91		4.61	**0.039
<b>Students Rating Employers</b>					
Orientation	4.54			4.06	**0.019
Communication with Superiors	4.68			4.34	**0.047

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

## V. RATING DIFFERENCES AMONG STUDENTS CLASS LEVEL

Evaluating rating differences based on class standing reveals several significant results. For the measures used for employers to rate students, significant differences appear in the following categories: grasp of concepts and punctuality. For the measures used for students to rate employers, a significant difference appears in quality of work. These findings indicate the employers see MBA students performing better than either juniors or seniors in the areas of being able to grasp concepts, demonstrating punctuality, and taking the initiative on the job. Except perhaps for punctuality (which should be rather normal for all employees), these findings demonstrate that the MBA students do perform at a higher level than their undergraduate counterparts. And as a parallel finding, they will be assigned higher quality tasks to perform as rated by the students. These results appear below in Table 14.

**Table 14: Ratings differences for Class Standing: Juniors, Seniors, MBAs**

	<i>Class Standing</i>			P-value
	<b>Juniors Mean</b>	<b>Seniors Mean</b>	<b>MBAs Mean</b>	
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>				
Grasp of Concepts		4.43	4.64	*0.069
Punctuality	4.61		4.85	*0.063
		4.65	4.85	*0.063
<b>Students Rating Employers</b>				
Quality of Work	4.25	4.48		*0.093
	4.25		4.63	**0.019

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

## VI. DIFFERENCES AMONG MAJORS

In addition to differences among students based on their undergraduate or graduate status, some statistical differences appear among student majors for the student rating employers on communication with superiors. The rating for accounting majors of 4.39 was significantly lower than the average for general business majors. Likewise, the finance rating of 4.18 (lowest among all majors) was significantly different from the rating by general business and management majors. The average rating of 4.56 by marketing majors was significantly lower than the rating for general business majors. Perhaps the marketing majors expected better communicating with superiors; or perhaps the more specialized majors (dealing with numbers, and often with less interactions with others in the work place) considered this variable less significant than others when on the job. Table 15 presents these relationships.

**Table 15: Ratings differences for Declared Major**

<b>Students Rating Employers</b>	<i>Majors</i>						<b>P-value</b>
	<b>ACCT Mean</b>	<b>BUAD Mean</b>	<b>FNCE Mean</b>	<b>GENB Mean</b>	<b>MGMT Mean</b>	<b>MKTG Mean</b>	
Communication with Supervisors	4.39			5.00			****0.000
		4.83	4.18				**0.017
			4.18	5.00			****0.000
			4.18		4.88		**0.040
				5.00		4.56	****0.001

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

\*\*\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.001$

## VII. DIFFERENCES OVER TIME

### Differences in Internship Semester

No significant differences appeared for any measures that students used to rate employers. Also, no significant differences appeared for any measures that students used to rate employers. But employer ratings for different terms (Spring, Summer, and Fall) revealed several significant results: significant differences for ability, grasp of concepts, and initiative. For these three rating topics, the ratings for fall are significantly higher than spring or summer, as shown in Table 16. Spring has the highest number of students enrolled, in part because of increased number of accounting and finance internships during tax season. In addition, these findings may reflect a higher intensity level among students as they approach the fall semester. Students begin the academic year with a sense of renewal, wanting to get off to a good start, and often a desire to improve. Spring tends to bring added distractions (spring break and/or graduation), while summer involves other vacation distractions, plus students working with supervisors who may be on vacation part of the time.

**Table 16: Ratings differences between terms: Fall, Spring, and Summer**

	<i>Term</i>			<b>P-value</b>
	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>	<b>Fall</b>	
<b>Number of Students</b>	162	93	109	
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>	<b>Spring Mean</b>	<b>Summer Mean</b>	<b>Fall Mean</b>	
Ability	4.67		4.82	**0.029
		4.66	4.82	*0.054
Grasp of Concepts	4.58		4.75	**0.027
		4.58	4.75	*0.059
Initiative	4.59		4.76	**0.040

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### Three Phases of the Program

The internship program in the Business College experienced continual growth over the ten years, but the College and the University System experienced upheaval over this time period. During the first seven years of the program, the Undergraduate Director assumed the additional duty of Internship Director. While the first four years experienced continuity in the directorship, the next three saw three different individuals serve as director. In addition, May 2006 - August 2007 saw the complete remodeling of the building that housed the College of Business (Dwire Hall, the first permanent building constructed after the campus was founded in 1965). During that time, College offices were scattered across campus, and even in temporary trailers. In 2008, the College created a separate position for Director of Internship and Career Development. That person remained in place throughout the remaining time in this study. Student ratings showed no significant difference during these middle years, but employer ratings revealed significant differences in rating student initiative and in overall student ratings. Although the ratings are still positive, these employer ratings were lower in the middle set of years, reflecting the significant change and upheaval that the college faced during that time (Table 17).

**Table 17: Ratings differences Over Three Time Periods**

	<i>Years</i>			<b>P-value</b>
	<b>2001-04 Mean</b>	<b>2005-07 Mean</b>	<b>2008-11 Mean</b>	
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>				
Initiative		4.55	4.71	*0.071
Overall	4.84	4.67		**0.015
	4.84		4.68	**0.015

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### Shift in Administrative Direction

Beyond the differences reflected by the slightly lower ratings in the middle years, a significant difference appears in overall program administration. In 2008, the College separated the duties of the Undergraduate Program Director into two positions, one for the Undergraduate Program and a new position as Director of Internships and Career Development. The dedicated position enabled the new internship director to spend more time developing connections with businesses and the Chamber of Commerce, thus opening new connections for internships. In addition, the same person worked actively to develop job opportunities for graduates. This merging of internship and placement responsibilities also brought more employers to campus both for job recruitment and for internship recruitment. The new director also conducted training sessions beyond resume writing, to include mock interview sessions. The impact of these changes appear when comparing the ratings over two time periods. This major change in Internship Administration appears in significantly higher evaluations both by employers and by students in specific areas. Employers rated student interns higher in initiative after the administrative change. Students also gave higher ratings for both communication with superiors and the career value of the internship. The findings, displayed in Table 18, reflect the value added with a dedicated director position.

**Table 18: Differences in Program Administration**

	<i>Years</i>		<b>P-value</b>
	<b>2001-07 Mean</b>	<b>2008-11 Mean</b>	
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>			
Initiative	4.58	4.71	**0.038
<b>Students Rating Employers</b>			
Communication with Superior	4.36	4.55	**0.046
<b>Career Value</b>	4.56	4.71	*0.59
*Significant at $\alpha = 0.1$			
**Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$			

### IX RATING DIFFERENCES BY STUDENT GENDER

Examining the data by gender of student and gender of supervisor yielded significant results in three areas: Overall employer ratings of students by gender, overall student rating of employers by gender, and differences of student ratings when supervisors were female.

#### Overall Employer Ratings of Students

Employers rated female students higher than male students in five specific measures and in overall rating, as shown in Table 19 (all of the employer ratings except initiative and attitude). The first four measures have weak significance (0.1); however, communication and overall rating are significant at the 0.05 level. Women have better communication skills, and especially interpersonal skills, than do men. Perhaps this generally recognized ability has a carry-over effect both to overall rating and to rating on other measures. In all of these ratings, the supervisor gender did not reveal any significant differences, so male and female supervisors rated student interns in a similar manner.

**Table 19: Employer Ratings of Students by Gender**

	<i>Gender</i>		<b>P-value</b>
	<b>F Mean</b>	<b>M Mean</b>	
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>			
Grasp of Concepts	4.68	4.56	*0.060
Reliability	4.74	4.62	*0.064
Punctuality	4.83	4.75	*0.082
Accepts Responsibility	4.77	4.65	*0.057
Communication Skills	4.60	4.42	**0.006
Overall	4.76	4.64	**0.040

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### **Overall Student Rating of Employer**

In rating employers overall, differences in student gender revealed differences in two measures: quality of work and educational value. In both cases, male students rated the employer higher on these two values. The male students apparently believed they received higher quality tasks or tasks that matched their abilities. They also recognized the greater educational value of the internship experience. Table 20 reflects these findings.

**Table 20: Rating differences by student gender**

	<i>Gender</i>		<b>P-value</b>
	<b>F Mean</b>	<b>M Mean</b>	
<b>Students Rating Employers</b>			
Quality of Work	4.37	4.51	*0.099
Educational Value	4.49	4.66	**0.032

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### **Ratings Differences for Female Supervisors**

Among all students, those with female supervisors rated the employer higher in communication with superior and acceptance by co-workers. Similar to the finding that the female students received higher ratings in communication in all of the employer ratings, female supervisors received higher communication ratings by all students.

Additionally, all students rated employers higher in acceptance of co-workers when the supervisor was female. This finding tends to verify the commonly accepted difference between males and females: females tend to be more nurturing, thus creating an environment of acceptance.

When separating students by gender in evaluating employers under female supervision, female students rated employers higher in acceptance by co-workers, with the overall mean slightly higher than when this same measure appeared among all students. Male students rated the educational value higher under female supervisors than under male supervisors. Perhaps these findings reflect the differences between the cognitive and affective domains: male students appreciate difference brought by female supervisors in a more cognitive way, and female students in a more affective way. Table 21 displays these results.

**Table 21: Student Rating differences for Female Supervisors**

	<i>Gender</i>		<b>P-value</b>
	<b>F Mean</b>	<b>M Mean</b>	
<b>All Students Rating Employers</b>			
Communication with Superior	4.56	4.36	**0.044
Acceptance by Co-workers	4.74	4.58	**0.013
<b>Female Students Rating Employers</b>			
Acceptance by Co-workers	4.76	4.57	**0.031
<b>Male Students Rating Employers</b>			
Educational Value	4.77	4.57	*0.071

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.1$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

## **X DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ACADEMIC ADVISORS**

With the growth of the internship program over the years, a second faculty member began to share in the academic advising of internship students, with one advisor assigned section 1 and the other section 2 of a course. Using the time period during which classes had two different sections, no significant differences appeared in the employer ratings of students. But in the student rating of the internship experience, a significant difference appeared in a single variable, educational value of the internship. Both faculty members followed the same set of requirements for students to submit journals and work samples during the internship, meet with the academic advisor, and submit a final paper based on assigned topics (with attachments containing journals and work samples). Rather than merely gaining on-the-job experience, the internship for credit requires students to submit “reflective journals,” as described on the student website:

A reflective journal goes beyond describing tasks on the job. Rather, it gets into your thoughts, assumptions, expectations, observations, and reactions along the way. Try to write something every day, recognizing that the journal will be more extensive when you encounter something new/different, and rather brief when you are doing routine tasks.

The reflective process follows Jack Mezirow’s proposition that individuals learn thorough three levels of reflection: content, process, and premise (quoted in Kreber and Cranton, 2000). The journals have students reflecting on the first two stages; and in the final paper, they addresses the third stage.



Subjective differences between the faculty members would include interpersonal interaction in meetings, and types of comments made on work submitted electronically. The only objective difference between the two faculty members appears in assigning the paper topics. For section 2, the academic advisor usually assigned the same 10 topics to all students, with very little variation. For section 1, the academic advisor assigned the same 4 topics to all students, but tailored the additional 6-8 questions to specific events for that individual's experience, basing the topics on issues mentioned in the student journals. Table 23 reflects this difference.

**Table 23: Differences Between Academic Advisors**

	Section 1 Mean	Section 2 Mean	P-value
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>			
Educational Value	4.65	4.44	*0.084
*Significant at $\alpha = 0.1$			

## **XI RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GPA AND EVALUATIONS**

The correlation of student GPA with evaluations revealed significant relationships for the Employers rating Students measures, but no significant relationships for any of the Students rating Employers measures.

### **Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Pearson correlation coefficient and p-values for the significant relationships are shown below. All significant relationship are positive, indicating that higher GPA at the start of the internship resulted in higher evaluation scores. Correlation of GPA with ability had the highest significance (0.01 level), followed by reliability and punctuality (0.05). Initiative was weakly correlated with GPA (0.1 level). Table 24 displays these findings.

**Table 24: Employer Rating and GPA**

	Correlation Coefficient	P-value
<b>Employers Rating Students</b>		
Ability	+0.143	***0.008
Reliability	+0.138	**0.011
Initiative	+0.09	*0.098
Punctuality	+0.122	**0.025
*Significant at $\alpha = 0.1$		
**Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$		
***Significant at $\alpha = 0.01$		

Curiously, although none of the student rating employers measures resulted in significant relationships; the correlation coefficients for all measures were negative, indicating that students with higher GPAs would rate employers lower. These measures are only descriptive of this sample and are only weakly negative, but they are interesting nonetheless.

### Gender Differences in GPA

To enter the internship program, students needed a minimum GPA of 2.5 out of 4.0 points. Over the course of the 11 years, the GPA of all internship students fell into the following ranges:

Range	No.	%
3.75 – 4.0	108	22.4
3.50 – 3.74	114	23.7
3.25 – 3.49	84	17.4%
3.0 – 3.24	82	17.0%
below 3.0	94	19.5%

Male and female students reflected a significant difference in GPA, with females averaging 3.41 (“B”) and males a 3.32 (B-). These differences reflect the GPA differences among all business students. Over the last two years covered in this study, the GPA for females averaged between 3.22 and 3.5; the average GPA for males averaged between 3.08 and 3.09. These numbers reflect all of the business students, including those below the minimum. Table 25 displays the male-female GPA difference among internship students.

**Table 25: Differences in GPA by Gender**

	F Mean	M Mean	P-value
Student GPA	3.41	3.32	**0.030

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### Pearson Correlations by Student Gender

Employer rating of students revealed two significant correlations with GPA. For female students, GPA correlated positively with the Reliability rating; and for male students, GPA correlated positively with Ability. Both were significant at the 0.05 level, as shown in Table 25. No other rating variables yielded a significant correlation.

Employers Rating Students	Correlation Coefficient	P-value
<b>Female Students</b>		
Reliability	+0.156	**0.022
<b>Male Students</b>		
Ability	+0.178	**0.048

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

### **XIII CONCLUSION**

The preliminary analysis verifies that the College of Business at UCCS provides qualified intern employees to the business community, and that the businesses provide a significant learning experience for the students. The data confirm the need for continuity in internship administration, plus the value added by a dedicated director of internships and placement. Along with the overall positive evaluations, the statistical analysis shows that student GPA correlates to higher ratings, leading to higher ratings for female interns. The evaluation criterion that stood out most often was communication with superiors, and this item differed significantly with academic majors. Department chairs can use this information to refine instruction in communication within their core courses. And academic advisors can see the significance of individualized topics assigned for final papers, rather than a standard template for all students. Other institutions can use this research in establishing or refining intern programs, particularly in justifying a dedicated program administrator. The differences between academic semesters may not apply directly to colleges that operate on a quarter system, but such colleges could still benefit from the remaining findings. For the future of this particular internship program, administrators are planning to add a student inventory at the start of the internship to clarify student expectations at the start of the program, since this mental attitude could affect the students' final evaluations, particularly in the perceived educational value.

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**THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**  
**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS**  
**A 10-YEAR STUDY: PART 3**

Charles E Beck and Monique French. “Impact of the Business Curriculum on Student Internship Experiences: A study of Student Subjective Reactions over Ten Years”

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**IMPACT OF THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM ON STUDENT  
INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES:  
A STUDY OF STUDENT SUBJECTIVE REACTIONS OVER TEN YEARS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Internships for academic credit give students the opportunity to apply classroom learning to an actual job setting. This third and final part of a ten-year study examines student subjective learning based on final internship reports submitted for academic credit. Earlier studies examined types and sizes of organizations based on NAICS codes, as well as for-profit, not-for-profit, and government agencies. The earlier studies examined student and employer ratings, controlling for academic semester and charting changes over ten years. This study focuses on two topics addressed in the final report: describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship; and describe yourself as a professional. Analysis of the first topic groups the responses according to majors' courses, core business courses, general education topics, and specific topics deemed most significant. It also examines topics which students thought needed more attention. The analysis of the second topic above focuses on the students' sense of self confidence as they move into professional fields, along with aspects of professionalism which they specifically identified. Further analysis indicates differences in student responses based in the types of industries where students served their internships.

**I. CURRICULUM PREPARATION**

This paper is the third part of a study of the ten-year experience in managing internships for academic credit in the College of Business at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. The first part of the study addresses the benefits from both the business and student perspectives, and examines the multiple roles that the university plays in the process. It also outlines the range of academic disciplines involved, the process used to ensure a quality experience for student and employer, and the evaluations provided by both student and employer (2012a). The second part continues the analysis by contrasting employer and student expectations from internships, then summarizing the student academic majors and the evaluation results. The extended analysis focuses on the size and types of organizations that provided internships, differences among academic majors, changes over time, and differences between the faculty members serving as academic advisors (2012b). This last part examines student subjective responses as described in their final paper describing their internship experiences. This study focuses on two of the common topics addressed in the final report:

- Describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship.
- Describe yourself as a professional.

Our analysis analyzes the common themes found as the students addressed these issues, and how the responses have changed over time and among academic majors. Finally, we link these responses to the student and employer evaluations of the program. We end with our sense of how well the business curriculum prepares students for workplace employment.

**II. CURRICULUM AND SPECIFIC COURSE PREPARATION**

The first question answered by most of the students concerned how well the curriculum prepared them for their internship experience. The responses were coded based on the types of comments students made. Some comments concerned the overall experience of learning through the internship versus learning in class. Other comments focused on general preparation through courses in the major and courses taken in

the business core. Finally, some students identified specific courses they found helpful. Tables 1 through 3 highlight these various responses.

In discussing how the curriculum prepared them for the internship, 299 students (70% of the 427 papers reviewed) referenced the difference between classroom learning and “real world” experience on the job. The responses indicating that this was a major part of the experience were coded 3; those indicating a significant part of the experience were coded 2; and those who briefly mentioned the point were coded 1. Overall, the preponderance of comments indicated that “real-world experience” was a major part of their experience (2.96). Table 1 displays the results by year for the 10 years.

**Table 1: Number of Students citing “Real World” Experience**

<i>Year</i>	<i>3 – Major Point</i>	<i>2 - Significant</i>	<i>1 – Brief Mention</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
<b>2001</b>	5			3	0
<b>2002</b>	11			3	0
<b>2003</b>	21			3	0
<b>2004</b>	25	2	1	2.86	0.448
<b>2005</b>	38	2		2.95	0.221
<b>2006</b>	56	3		2.95	0.222
<b>2007</b>	23	1		2.96	0.204
<b>2008</b>	43			3.00	0
<b>2009</b>	29	1		2.97	0.183
<b>2010</b>	44			3.00	0
<b>Overall</b>	299	9	1	2.96	0.202

Aside from the distinction between classroom learning and the real-life experience, most students referenced the academic preparation provided by their majors’ courses or by the core requirements.

5	Excellent preparation
4	Good preparation
3	Ok preparation
2	Didn’t take enough courses
1	Inadequate preparation

The “Didn’t take enough” category reflects students who took an internship too early, without sufficient grounding in their field (such as “I took this internship as a first-semester junior, but should have waited until first-semester senior, after I had completed X course”). Most of the non-5 ratings involved not taking enough majors courses prior to doing the internship. Overall, 77% of all students commented on their majors’ courses, with an average rating of 4.60. Sixty-three percent of students commented on the business core preparation, with an overall rating of 4.58. Table 2 displays these findings, broken down by year.



**Table 2: Majors' Course Preparation and Core Course Preparation**

<i>Year</i>	<b>Majors' Preparation</b>			<b>Core Courses Preparation</b>		
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
<b>2001</b>	7	5.0	0	2	5.0	0
<b>2002</b>	17	4.35	1.057	15	4.13	1.060
<b>2003</b>	29	4.52	0.871	22	4.86	0.468
<b>2004</b>	33	4.67	0.736	17	4.53	0.874
<b>2005</b>	40	4.37	1.030	22	4.55	0.858
<b>2006</b>	60	4.48	0.892	56	4.39	0.947
<b>2007</b>	24	4.67	0.637	23	4.43	0.896
<b>2008</b>	44	4.89	0.321	44	4.48	0.823
<b>2009</b>	30	4.57	0.817	25	4.48	0.823
<b>2010</b>	45	4.67	0.674	44	4.68	0.674
<b>Overall</b>	329	4.60	0.791	270	4.58	0.791

Beyond the mention of the curriculum in general, students identified types of courses in Business or in the general Liberal Arts courses outside of the College of Business. The courses mentioned tend to highlight skills learned in the courses that helped them in their internships. Table 3.

**Table 3: Types of Courses Considered Significant for Interns**

<i>Courses Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>Business Courses</b>		
Computer Skills	155	36.3
Project Writing	64	15.0
Teamwork	68	15.9
Economics	10	2.3
<b>Liberal Arts Courses</b>		
Public Speaking	59	13.8
English Writing	49	11.5
Psychology/Sociology	34	8.0

Some students indicated general areas, and others listed individual course numbers. But Table 3 describes the types of courses if they were referenced either way.

#### IV. SENSE OF PROFESSIONALISM

The second topic that most students addressed was “Describe Yourself as a Professional.” In this open-ended discussion, students took a variety of approaches. A few focused on the significance of professional dress in the workplace. Most students referenced their ability to make a difference in the workplace as proof of their professionalism. Alternately, students commented on how well prepared they were to fit in with a professional workforce.

A total of 63 students (14.8%) referenced the issue of professional dress, as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Students Citing Professional Dress in the Workplace**

<i>Year</i>	<i>3 – Important</i>	<i>2 – Noticed</i>	<i>1 – Not Important</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Std Dev</i>
<b>2001</b>					
<b>2002</b>	3			3	0
<b>2003</b>	6	1	1	2.63	0.744
<b>2004</b>	5	1		2.83	0.408
<b>2005</b>	7	1	1	2.67	0.707
<b>2006</b>	12		1	2.85	0.555
<b>2007</b>	11	1		2.92	0.289
<b>2008</b>	9			3.00	0.00
<b>2009</b>	7	1		2.87	0.354
<b>2010</b>	3			3.00	0.00
<b>Overall</b>	63	5	3	2.85	0.467

On a more significant level of professionalism, 271 students (63.5%) commented on the fact that they made a difference in the workplace. Comments reflected the types of projects they were given to complete, the confidence expressed by supervisors or co-workers, and the extent to which they could use their own initiative and creativity in completing projects. Table 5 reflects the number of students who believe they made a difference on the job.

**Table 5: Made a Difference in the Workplace**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<b>2001</b>	2	28.6
<b>2002</b>	3	15.8
<b>2003</b>	23	76.7
<b>2004</b>	22	64.7
<b>2005</b>	30	69.8
<b>2006</b>	56	86.2

<b>2007</b>	23	71.9
<b>2008</b>	40	75.5
<b>2009</b>	27	37
<b>2010</b>	45	63.4
<b>Total</b>	271	63.4

Students reflected their sense of professionalism in the confidence they felt in their position: how well prepared are they to begin a full-time job in this profession. Of the nearly three-fourths of students indicating professional confidence, 62.5% considered themselves well prepared for professional work, and 9% percent considered themselves better prepared for professional work. Only 8 individuals (1.9%) felt “non-enough” preparation, and all 8 in the Table 2 calculations above had either taken not enough majors’ courses (item #2) or had considered their preparation merely ok (item #3). Table 5 displays these findings. In terms of the 314 students who addressed this topic, 85% felt well prepared, 12.4% felt better prepared, and only 2.5% felt not enough preparation.

**Table 6: Professional Confidence in Position**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Well Prepared</i>	<i>Better Prepared</i>	<i>Not Enough</i>
<b>2001</b>			
<b>2002</b>	10	3	1
<b>2003</b>	25	3	1
<b>2004</b>	21	9	2
<b>2005</b>	32	8	2
<b>2006</b>	49	8	2
<b>2007</b>	22	1	
<b>2008</b>	43		
<b>2009</b>	26	2	
<b>2010</b>	39	5	
<b>Total</b>	267	39	8
<b>Percent of Students</b>	62.5	9.1	1.9

The final aspect of Professionalism concerns comments students made about their confidence in their selection of a career area. Few students addressed this issue during the first 2 years, but the one-third did thereafter. Overall, the internship helped students re-affirm their career choice. For some reason, more students did not respond in 2009 compared to other years. Although 8 students realized that they were not suited for that type of professional work, such a realization itself is a significant learning experience!

**Table 7: Confidence in Selected Career Area**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Not</i>	<i>No response</i>	<i>Percent of Students Responding YES</i>
<b>2001</b>	2	0	5	28.6
<b>2002</b>	5	0	14	26.3
<b>2003</b>	18	0	12	60.0
<b>2004</b>	25	4	5	73.5
<b>2005</b>	37	2	4	86.0
<b>2006</b>	57	2	6	87.7
<b>2007</b>	22		10	68.8
<b>2008</b>	38		15	71.7
<b>2009</b>	28		45	38.4
<b>2010</b>	45		26	63.4
<b>Total</b>	143	8	142	72.6

One accounting student preferred general accounting to tax preparation. Both an accounting and a finance student thought they were better suited for sales or marketing. A student working for the State Legislature realized politics was not her best fit. And two students realized they were not suited for big corporations, but wanted to work for a small company or start his own company. In a student's words, "I realized I would prefer to be a big fish in a small pond, than start at the bottom as a small fish in a big pond."

## **V. FURTHER ANALYSIS**

For the data analysis, we examined the NAICS groupings that we used in the second part of our study, which examined the student and employer ratings for internship. The first NAICS group, 22-48, represents utilities, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and retail trade. Grouping 51-56 represents accounting, finance and management, and technical services – mostly the more introverted (and often "geek") types of careers. Finally, the 61-92 grouping reflects the more extraverted, interactive service fields, including education, health care, food and accommodation services, and public administration. In examining the student comments, we used the Chi-square test of independence to determine significant differences.

For the Course preparation provided in the student's major, significant differences appear within the 3 industry categories. Students in the utilities, construction and trades industries felt that they did not take enough major courses prior to the internship. Additionally, more students in the accounting, finance and tech services fields considered their preparation between ok and good. No significant differences appeared for those students in the services industries. Table 8 displays these findings. Although a significant difference appears in the preparation provided in the student's major, no significant difference appeared in the business core courses.

**Table 8: Major Course Preparation**

<i>Industry Group</i>	<i>Student Rating</i>		
	<b>Not enough courses</b>	<b>OK preparation</b>	<b>Good preparation</b>
Utilities, Construction, Manufacturing, Retail Trade	More than expected	Fewer than expected	
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Management, Tech Support Services: Education, Health, Food accommodation, public admin		More than expected	More than expected

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

For those citing professional dress, a significant relationship appears with the first grouping of industries, with more than expected citing the importance of professional dress. Additionally, more than expected in the services industries indicated that dress was not important. Given the small numbers who mentioned professional dress, the results should be viewed with caution. As an interesting aside, when the analysis was done over just the early years, professional dress seemed significant to those in the finance and accounting industries. Table 9 reflects these findings.

**Table 9: Professional Dress**

<i>Industry Group</i>	<i>Student Rating</i>	
	<b>Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Utilities, construction, manufacturing retail trade	More than expected	
finance, insurance, real estate, management, technical support Services -education, health, food accommodation, public admin		More than expected

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

Students responding to their Professionalism recognized three related issues: making a difference in the workplace, professional confidence, and their confidence in choosing a career area. Table 10 displays the findings, which show remarkable similarity. In all three categories, those working in utilities, construction, and retail trade showed no significant differences. Those in the second group showed more than expected within each of the three professional categories. And the service industries indicated less than expected in each of the categories.

**Table 10: Sense of Professionalism**

<i>Industry Group</i>	<i>Sense of Professionalism</i>		
	<b>Made a difference</b>	<b>Professional Confidence</b>	<b>Confidence in Career Choice</b>
Utilities, Construction, Manufacturing, Retail Trade			
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Management, Tech Support	More than expected	More than expected	More than expected
Services: Education, Health, Food Accommodation, Public Admin	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected
	*Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$	*Significant at $\alpha = 0.10$	*Significant at $\alpha = 0.05$

While at first glance the findings for groups 2 and 3 might seem unusual, a closer examination reveals that group 2 more comprehensively reflects topics and courses in the Business College curriculum, including accounting, finance, management, and information technology. And the fewer than expected in group 3 will have some confirmation in Section IV below, where a number of students indicated the need for a course in sales.

## **VI. CURRICULAR ISSUES THAT STUDENTS IDENTIFIED**

In the first general topic that all internship students addressed, the second part involved how the curriculum did not prepare them for their internship. Sixty-five students (15.2%) identified areas where they felt unprepared by the curriculum, with most students identifying more than one area. The following series of tables presents their issues grouped by topics.

Table 11 lists the general business topics and computer programs mentioned. The topic mentioned most frequently concerns not taking the proper courses before the internship. These 9 instances (2.1%) involve student choice rather than the college curriculum. Some students took an internship during tax season while concurrently taking the tax course, thus taking advantage of an available internship despite the inopportune curriculum timing. Some took an internship in their discipline despite having completed less than half of their courses in the discipline. The comments on “hands-on work” and “individual comprehensive projects” seem already incorporated into the curriculum. For computer programs, a course in graphic design (1.2%) is a good recommendation. For The Microsoft programs, two students did not take the available courses. Social media and web communications should probably be incorporated into the curriculum, but the Accounting probably cannot cover all possible computer applications like QuickBooks.

**Table 11: General Business and Computer Program Recommendations**

<i>Topics Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<b>General Business Topics</b>	
Not Taking Course before Internship	9
Austrian School of Economics	1
Hands-on Work	1
Individual Comprehensive Projects	1
<b>Computer Programs</b>	
Graphics design/Creativity	5
Microsoft Programs/Web Communication	4
Media Interaction & Social Media	2
QuickBooks	2

Table 12 lists student lack of preparation for accounting and finance. The non-profit and government accounting reflects the intern opportunities in Colorado Springs, with four military bases and many not-for profit organizations. The finance topics reflect the number of students who interned with branch offices of major investment firms.

**Table 12: Accounting and Finance Recommendations**

<i>Topics Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<b>Accounting &amp; Finance</b>	
Government Accounting	3
Non-Profit Accounting	3
Government Contracting	2
Link Accounting and HR	1
Other Accounting	1
Financial Markets and Investing	3
Professional Certification (CPA)	3
Tax Course (better, more permanent faculty)	3
Topics missing from FNCE 420	1

Table 13 lists the areas identified by Marketing interns. An added focus on sales looks like a good recommendation for the curriculum; Although public relations is an area covered by the Communication Department, it could become a topic included in a marketing course.

**Table 13: Marketing Recommendations**

<i>Topics Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<b>Marketing</b>	
Sales Course	7
Commercial Innovation	1
Marketing Strategies	1
Public Relations	1

Table 14 reflects the inputs for Organizational behavior. The greatest concern here (1.6%) is preparing students for office politics, interacting with supervisors, and determining proper behavior for their specific situation. These issues did not become an area of concern if students discussed their problem with the academic advisor or addressed them in the journals submitted to their advisor. The curriculum does include business plans, but again students may not have taken the course before the internship. And sizing-up a situation seems a normal part of human behavior.

**Table 14: Student Recommendations**

<i>Topics Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<b>Organizational Behavior</b>	
Office Interactions/conflict resolution/politics	7
Business Plans	2
Focus on small organizations	2
Interview People in Companies	1
Balanced Scorecard	1
Size Up Situations before acting	1

Finally, Table 15 lists the topics mentioned by human resource majors. Communication with professionals (0.7%) is actually part of the career fairs and speaker series sponsored by the student chapter of SHRM, the Society for Human Resources Management. Other student clubs include Accounting, Marketing, Ethics, and national professional honor societies. The four items mentioned individually are covered in various college courses.

**Table 15: Human Resources Recommendations**

<i>Topics Identified</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
<b>Human Resources</b>	
Communication with Professionals	3
Compensation	1
Health Reimbursement	1
HIPPA and COBRA	1
Workplace Training	1



## VII. EMPHASIS ON WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

As indicated above, two students mentioned the need for social media emphasis. During the final two years of our study, marketing students began highlighting the importance of website design and the recently growing usage of social media. As summarized by an intern working for a major sports and concert venue,

The website is what I spent the majority of my time creating and fixing to become more user friendly. The goal of the marketing department at the ... Arena is to have websites that are user friendly so that customers can check the website to find all of the information needed and order tickets as well as re-new season tickets all online.

An intern working for a small technology company summarized her role as follows:

[W]e began to discuss social media, which any college student my age would be an expert in. I finally felt like I did not have to play catch-up but inform those I was working with why social media is an asset to any company. From there, I was given the responsibility of managing social media or "owning" it as they say.

A student intern for a major credit union was placed in charge of developing the company's new social media presence on four different platforms. Similarly, a marketing intern working for a small business clarified the need:

If a business isn't using some form of social media to market themselves they are missing out on market share. It's no longer as beneficial for companies to market through mail and paper media. The best and most cost effective way is to market yourself through your website and using sites like Facebook, Twitter and Google.... You want to be visible to these consumers so you can get some word of mouth advertising in this way.

Blogs are another way that companies can communicate with their consumers and get the word out about new products or ideas..., keep in contact with their networks of fellow business women and to showcase upcoming events. [B]logs can ... far outreach previous communication in business marketing.

According to a marketing intern for a major television station,

Advertising with TV ads and online banner ads are still in existence and most likely will be for years to come, however with the new media that has evolved, businesses want to integrate these new platforms into their marketing campaigns.

It is free for businesses to create a Facebook page for their business and gives them a way to interact with their current customers and attract new customers. Many businesses however need help promoting their Facebook pages in order to grow their fan base and that is where we come in. We have a growing Facebook presence and fan base that can be used to drive our fans to other businesses pages.

And finally, a marketing intern for a major outdoor shopping center provides a fitting summary of this major shift:

The Internet is changing the nature of marketing by offering more ways that we can reach out and expand our marketing demographic. [We can] reach out to millions of people of all ages, from kids to the older generations throughout the United States and the world.

It may not seem like we see the results right away when it gets people to come to the events that we promote on Facebook, but we know that people do see it and tell their friends about it.

Where it used to be a marketing coordinator would send out a mailer once or twice a month, and hope that people would read it, we can use the internet to reach out to people more frequently.... [W]e will usually post two or three things every week on Facebook, letting them know about events we have going on with the shopping center or individual stores.

With the rapid expansion of social media, our college student interns found themselves leading companies ranging from small businesses, financial institutions, television stations, and large shopping venues into the social media age.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

This study based on discussions in the students' final internship papers further confirms the soundness of the Business College curriculum in preparing students for the work world. It correlates in more detail our earlier findings the ratings of both employers and students concerning the program.

From the 77% of students commenting on their major's preparation, the rating of 4.6 out of 5 lies toward excellent in the good-excellent range.

Of the 62% of students commenting on the business core courses, again the 4.58 rating leans toward excellent in the good-excellent range.

For professionalism, 63.5% of students indicated that they made a difference in the workplace, despite being an intern and not an employee, and over 85% identified confidence in their position.

Only 15.2% identified any areas where they were not prepared – and that mostly came from the student's selection of the timing of the internship.

Of those citing confidence in career area, 94.5% re-affirmed their career decision. Only 8 students realized the need to change career emphasis, something significant to learn prior to graduation and entering the workforce.

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**THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**  
**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS**  
**A 10-YEAR STUDY: PART 4**

Charles E Beck and Monique French. “Impact of the Business Curriculum on Student Internship Experiences: A study of Student Subjective Reactions over Ten Years – Further Analysis”

[This supplemental analysis has not previously been published]



# **IMPACT OF THE BUSINESS CURRICULUM ON STUDENT INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES: FURTHER ANALYSIS OF STUDENT SUBJECTIVE REACTIONS OVER TEN YEARS**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This short study extends the further analysis begun in Part 3 Section V above. Part Three of this a ten-year study of student subjective learning focused on two topics that students addressed in their final report: describe how the curriculum at UCCS prepared you (or did not prepare you) for your internship; and describe yourself as a professional. The analysis in Section V evaluated student learning and professionalism based on the NAIS groupings of industries where students served their internships. This further analysis considers additional organizational and student categories.

## **II. BUSINESS VARIABLES**

Our analysis found no significant differences between student learning and the following business variables

Public vs Private	(Table 4, p. 22 above)
Location Type – Branch, HQ, Single Location	(Table 4, p. 22 above)
Facility Size	(Table 5, p. 23 above)
Year of Founding	(Table 13, p. 27 above)

However, a significant difference did appear between student discussion of the real-world experience of their internship and the number of employees at the work location. Additionally, Continuing the Table numbering from Part 3, Table 16 presents these findings.

**Table 16: Real World Experience and Number of Employees**

<i>Student Rating</i>			
<i>Number of Employees</i>	<b>Brief Mention</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Major Point</b>
0-5		Fewer than expected	
6-20			
21-100		More than expected	
➤ 100			

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

This finding indicates that students working in a very small business do not have the same sense of a real world experience as those who work in much larger organizations. While they may be able to apply their skills to enhance the business, smaller organizations more closely resemble small classroom groups than a legitimate real-world experience.

### III. STUDENT VARIABLES

Our analysis found no significant differences between student learning and the following student variables

Class Standing – Junior, Senior, MBA	(Table 14, p. 27 above)
Student Gender	(Tables 19 & 20, p. 31 above)

However, a significant difference did appear in areas involving student GPA, and three areas of student learning have significant differences related to the semester involved in the internship: Major course preparation, Made a difference, and Career confidence.

#### Significance of Student GPA

A regression analysis reveals a significant difference between GPA and students' discussion of how well the majors courses prepared them for the internship. Those with higher GPA's had a positive correlation with students who rated the major courses preparation higher (Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). Thus the better students realized how well their major courses prepared them for their internship position.

#### Significance of Internship Semester

The semester in which a student completed the internship reveals significant differences in three areas: Major course preparation, making a difference on the job, and career confidence.

**Table 17: Semester and Major Course Preparation**

<i>Major Course Preparation</i>	<i>Student Rating</i>			
	<b>Not enough courses</b>	<b>OK Preparation</b>	<b>Good Preparation</b>	<b>Excellent Preparation</b>
No response			Fewer than expected	
Spring	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected	More than expected
Summer	More than expected	More than expected	More than expected	
Fall		Fewer than expected	More than expected	

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

The semester issue reflects the timing of the internship within the program – coming earlier or closer to graduation. The excellent preparation identified by spring internships reflects students who did the internship after completing most of their major's courses. Those taking summer and fall internships still had majors courses to complete, so these students recognized a good preparation from the major while acknowledging that they still had major courses to complete.

**Table 18: Semester and Made a Difference**

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Student Rating</i>	
	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>
No response	More than expected	Fewer than expected
Spring	Fewer than expected	More than expected
Summer	Fewer than expected	More than expected
Fall	More than expected	Fewer than expected

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

For the spring semester, the more than expected “Made a Difference” parallels the prior discussion of course preparation – students who felt better prepared were confident in their ability to apply what they knew in making contributions to the company. However, the summer interns also felt they made a difference. In many cases, summer interns were not taking other classes at the same time – so they could devote more dedicated time and effort in the internship.

**Table 19: Semester and Career Confidence**

<i>Career Confidence</i>	<i>Student Rating</i>		
	<b>No Response</b>	<b>Not Confident</b>	<b>Yes, Confident</b>
No response			Fewer than expected
Spring	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected	Fewer than expected
Summer	More than expected	More than expected	More than expected
Fall		Fewer than expected	More than expected

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

The previous two values of Course preparation and Made a difference reflected students’ sense of how effective they were on the job. In contrast, confidence about their choice of a career area affirms their original choice of a college major, an affirmation that does not depend on their class standing at the time they did the internship.

#### **Interaction of Class Standing and Semester on Major Course Prep and Career Confidence**

The combination of class standing and semester reveal significant differences in Major Course Preparation for MBA students and reveal significant differences for seniors and MBA students in Career Confidence.

**Table 20: Class Standing by Semester and Major Course Preparation**

	Juniors	Seniors	MBAs*
Fall	no differences	no differences	3.00
Spring	no differences	no differences	4.71
Summer	no differences	no differences	

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.05$

For the MBA students, the timing of the internship made a significant difference in their sense of preparation. The majority of MBA students are part-time rather than full time students. So the timing of the internship within their program reflects the percentage of the degree completion when they took the internship. Ideally, the internship should come late in the sequence; however, if an excellent opportunity presents itself, and offers the possibility of moving from intern to anew hire, students are well served by taking the internship early.

**Table 21: Class Standing by Semester and Career Confidence**

	Juniors	Seniors	MBAs
Fall	no differences	3.00	3.00
Spring	no differences	2.81*	2.92**
Summer	no differences		2.00***

\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.10$

\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.01$

\*\*\*\*Significant at  $\alpha = 0.001$

For both seniors and MBA students, completing an internship in the fall tended to reinforce their selection of a career path the most significantly. For MBA students, the sharper contrast between Fall and Summer perhaps reflects the real-life conflicts in the condensed period between job, classes, family, and internship requirements.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

As indicated in Part 3 above, this study based on discussions in the students' final internship papers further confirms the soundness of the Business College curriculum in preparing students for the work world. It also correlates in more detail our earlier findings the ratings of both employers and students concerning the program. The analysis here reveals differences in student experiences based on the size of the organization in which they did the internship, the different recognition of course preparation among the top students, and how the timing of the internship affects their evaluation of major course preparation and career confidence. Although timing of an internship comes best toward the end of a student's program, students and administrators must balance the ideal timing of an internship verses the opportunity provided for a combined internship for credit and a potential full-time job.



## APPENDIX 1: INDIVIDUAL PROFESSORS EMPHASIZED IN STUDENT FINAL PAPERS

### Names of professors acknowledged by number of students

Beck	9	Benzmiller	1
Czaplewski	8	Berenek	1
Gruen	6	Duray	1
Miller	5	Ferguson	1
Milliman	5	Flannigan	1
Olsen	5	Knock	1
Schubert	5	Martz	1
Stringer	5	Moskowitz	1
Warrick	5	Nasby	1
Trumpfeller	4	Reddy	1
Butterfield	3	Von Bretton	1
Crowley	3	White	1
Gardner	3	Wilcox	1
Smith	2	Swickard-Gorman (COMM)	1
Weigand	2		